

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3131
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 1577

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, ET
SUBJ: TENSE SECURITY SITUATION CONTINUING

REFS: A) ADDIS ABABA 1527, B) ADDIS ABABA 1443,
C) ADDIS ABABA 1372, D) ADDIS ABABA 1357,
E) ADDIS ABABA 1212, F) ADDIS ABABA 0178

SUMMARY: EPMG CAMPAIGN TO MOVE REVOLUTION FROM "DEFENSIVE"
TO "OFFENSIVE" POSTURE LEAVING MANY VICTIMS IN ITS WAKE. KEBELE
OFFICIALS AND OTHER PRO-GOVERNMENT CIVILIANS APPARENTLY HIGH
PRIORITY TARGETS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ASSASSINS. MARCH 15
ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ASSASSINATION OF PETTY OFFICER HAILU
AMENE WHO SERVED WITH ZEMETHCHA CAMPAIGN IN DEBRE-TSIGIE
(SHOA), MARCH 13 ASSASSINATIONS OF DEBRE MARKOS (GOJJAM) KEBELE
MEMBERS, COMARADES FIKRE GUANCH AND TCHANE WORKINEH, AND SEIZURE
OF VARIOUS TYPES OF WEAPONS, AMMUNITION, AND CASH BY 22 SEARCH
TEAMS IN DESSIE. MARCH 16 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED FUNERAL
SERVICES HELD FOR COMRADE BEKELE AREDA, KEBELE REVOLUTIONARY
DEFENSE COMMITTEE MEMBER, LIQUIDATION OF "OUTLAWS" BY PEOPLE'S
MILITIA IN SOUTH, AND EXPOSURE OF 42 TEACHERS IN DIRE DAWA
AND 24 ALLEGED EPRP MEMBERS AT ADDIS ABABA TECHNICAL SCHOOL.
IN CONTINUING EFFORT TO ARM WORKERS, PEASANTS AND OTHER PROGRESSIVE
FORCES, EPMG PRESENTED ARMS TO METEHARA SUGAR FACTORY WORKERS
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AND 800 HARARGHE PROVINCE PEOPLE'S MILITIA. UNOFFICIAL REPORTS
OF ASSASSINATIONS OF OTHER ADDIS ABABA KEBELE OFFICIALS ALSO
HAVE INCREASED MARKEDLY IN PAST WEEK. SHOOTING INCIDENTS CAN
BE HEARD IN VARIOUS QUARTERS OF ADDIS ABABA EACH NIGHT. END
SUMMARY.

1. ETHIOPIAN MEDIA ACCOUNTS PROVIDING DAILY EVIDENCE OF CON-

SEQUENCES OF MOVING ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION FROM "DEFENSIVE" TO "OFFENSIVE" POSTURE. MARCH 15 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ASSASSINATION OF PETTY OFFICER HAILU AMENE. HE HAD WORKED FOR NATIONAL WORK CAMPAIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COOPERATION (ZEMETCHA) FROM DECEMBER 20, 1975 UNTIL HIS DEATH MARCH 12. HE PRAISED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO STRUGGLE OF OPPRESSED MASSES AND TO ZEMETCHA.

2. ANTI-GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST URBAN DWELLERS' ASSOCIATION (KEBELE) OFFICIALS CONTINUING, WITH ASSASSINATIONS OF FIKRE GUANCH, AND TCHANE WORKINEH IN DEBRE MARKOS, GOJJAM PROVINCIAL CAPITAL. FIKRE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & SETTLEMENT EMPLOYEE AND CHAIRMAN OVERALL COMMITTEE OF DEBRE MARKOS KEBELE. TCHANE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LOCAL STAFF MEMBER AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF SAME KEBELE COMMITTEE. ARTICLE REPORTS "PAID" ASSASSIN OF TWO MEN, AYELE SEW-YIMER, SHOT AND KILLED BY ONE OF VICTIMS.

3. FOLLOWING PREVIOUS WEEK'S ASSASSINATION OF MAJOR NEGUSSIE TUJI, HEAD OF PUBLIC SAFETY FOR WOLLO PROVINCE IN DESSIE (REFTEL C), EXTREMELY THOROUGH HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH CARRIED OUT PAST WEEK IN DESSIE BY PEASANTS' MILITIA AND MEN IN UNIFORM. OPERATION REPORTEDLY UNCOVERED 447 RIFLES, 357 PISTOLS, 3 MACHINE GUNS, 14 BINOCULARS, SEVEN 50 AND 37-CALIBRE ANTI-AIRCRAFT AMMUNITION, AND 17,169 ROUNDS OF OTHER TYPES OF AMMUNITION. LARGE QUANTITIES EPRP COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY LEAFLETS CAPTURED, 10,000 BIRR SEIZED, AND 4.7 TONS OF HOARDED GRAIN CONFISCATED. SIMILAR OPERATION CONDUCTED IN GHIMBI AND KELEM "AWRAJAS" (WOLLEGA) BY PEASANTS AND URBAN DWELLERS. (COMMENT: NUMBER OF WEAPONS SEIZED PROBABLY INFLATED. SEARCH CONFIDENTIAL

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AND SEIZURE OPERATIONS BECOMING COMMONPLACE IN COUNTRYSIDE AND THERE GROWING EVIDENCE THEY BEING CONDUCTED IN ADDIS ABABA ON UNOFFICIAL BASIS. RUMORS PERSIST AND ONE RELIABLE SOURCE ALLEGES ADDIS ABABA HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH, WHICH SUSPENDED JANUARY 12 (REFTEL F), WILL RESUME SHORTLY. END COMMENT.)

4. MARCH 16 HERALD REPORTED ASSASSINATION OF AND FUNERAL SERVICES FOR ONE BEKELE AREDA WHO MEMBER OF HIGHER KEBELE REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE AT TIME OF HIS ASSASSINATION. BEKELE WORKER AT AMBESSA FLOUR & MACARONI FACTORY AND CAME FROM SHOA PROVINCE. IT POSSIBLE BEKELE SAME PERSON AS KEBELE MEMBER KILLED IN FRONT OF EMB OFFICER'S HOME EVENING MARCH 13.

5. CAMPAIGN TO "LIQUIDATE" REACTIONARIES AND COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES CONTINUING APACE IN SOUTHERN PROVINCES. MARCH 16 HERALD REPORTS THREE COMBINED PEOPLES' MILITIA AND SECURITY TASK FORCES LIQUIDATED 43 "OUTLAWS AND SEIZED LARGE QUANTITIES ARMS AND AMMUNITION" IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS OF HARARGHE PROVINCE. BALE PEOPLES' MILITIA CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN MOPPING-UP OPERATION

IN WHICH THEY, TOO, ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE "WIPE OUT MANY OUTLAWS AND SEIZED LARGE QUANTITIES ARMS AND AMMUNITION". IN TROUBLED GHINIR DISTRICT (BALE), 5 OUTLAWS LIQUIDATED AND WEAPONS SEIZED. IN SOUTHEAST SIDAMO PROVINCE, JEMJEM "AWRAJA", 18 COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES REPORTED KILLED AND MANY OTHERS WOUNDED. (COMMENT: PEOPLES' MILITIA AND EPMG SECURITY OPERATIONS APPEAR TO HAVE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY IN SOUTH IN PAST THREE WEEKS, PROBABLY AS RESULT OF INCREASED INSURGENT ACTIVITY THERE. END COMMENT).

6. EXPOSURE OF ALLEGED EPRP MEMBERS ALSO PROCEEDING APACE IN ADDIS ABABA AND OTHER MAJOR TOWNS. MARCH 15 HERALD REPORTED 42 TEACHERS EXPOSED IN DIRE DAWA FOR MAINTAINING COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY STAND. EIGHTEEN OF TEACHERS EXPOSED AS MEMBERS OF EPRP, EDU, AND ELF WHILE 24 OTHERS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT REPORT OF THEIR "REAL" STAND WITHIN 24 HOURS.

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

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IO-13 OMB-01 MCT-01 SY-05 /079 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 1577

EXPOSURE CONDUCTED BY WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES AND KEBELES. MARCH 16 HERALD REPORTED EXPOSURE OF 24 ALLEGED EPRP MEMBERS AT ADDIS ABABA TECHNICAL SCHOOL WHO ACCUSED OF ENGAGING IN KIDNAPPING AND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AGAINST "PROGRESSIVE" STUDENTS AT SCHOOL, DISRUPTING CLASSES, AND CREATING ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY TERROR. TWO MEMBERS OF WORKERS' REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE ADDRESSED SCHOOL GATHERING PLEDGING SUPPORT OF PROGRESSIVES' STRUGGLE. (COMMENT: AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, EPMG APPEARS TO HAVE STEPPED-UP EFFORT TO "EXPOSE" EPRP MEMBERS AND SYMPATHIZERS AND WINNOW OUT OTHER ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS IN ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY BY TARRING THEM WITH DISSIDENT GROUPS' LEBELS. KEBELES AND REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE BEING EMPLOYED INCREASINGLY FOR THIS OBJECTIVE. END COMMENT.)

7. IN KEEPING WITH ITS PLEDGE TO ARM WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND OTHER PROGRESSIVE FORCES, EPMG PRESENTED ARMS TO METEHARA SUGAR FACTORY WORKERS AND HARARGHE PEOPLES' MILITIA. SGT. LEGESSE ASFAW, PMAC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF ARMED FORCES' POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND CHAIRMAN OF PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ARMING MASSES, PRESENTED ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO METEHARA WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE. ST. LEGESSE CONCLUDED HIS PRESENTATION SPEECH SAYING HE CONFIDENT ARMED MASSES WOULD WIPE OUT FORCES OF FEUDALISM, IMPERIALISM, BUREAUCRATIC CAPITALISM, EDU, EPRP, ELF AND CIA. ALL ETHIOPIAN TRADE UNION (AETU) SECRETARY GENERAL
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ALEMU MAMMO, ALSO SPOKE ON OCCASION AND EXPRESSED "JOY" THAT EPMG HAD RESPONDED TO WORKERS' CALL FOR ARMS. IN SIMILAR CEREMONY, UNIDENTIFIED PMAC MEMBER ASSIGNED TO HARARGHE PROVINCE URGED 800 NEWLY ARMED PEOPLES' MILITIA TO USE WEAPONS TO LIQUIDATE ENEMIES OF THE REVOLUTION.

8. EVENING, MARCH 14, FOUR KEBELE OFFICIALS ASSASSINATED ON ROAD TO EMB OFFICER'S HOUSE IN MAJOR GUN BATTLE AFTER CURFEW HOURS. EARLIER SAME EVENING MAJOR FIRE FIGHT TOOK PLACE BEHIND MARINE SECURITY GUARD (MSG) COMPOUND, APPROXIMATELY 1 KM. FROM EMBASSY WITH 5 TO 10 REPORTED DEAD. THERE UNOFFICIAL DAILY REPORTS OF NEIGHBORHOOD SHOOTINGS AND MANY U.S. COMMUNITY MEMBERS ABLE TO HEAR GUNFIRE IN ADDIS ABABA NEARLY EVERY NIGHT. DESPITE CONTINUED MIDNIGHT CURFEW, MOST ADDIS RESIDENTS, INCLUDING NON-ETHIOPIANS, MAKING EFFORT TO REMAIN OFF STREETS AFTER 9:00 P.M. UNLESS GOING TO OFFICIAL INVITATIONS. NOT SURPRISINGLY, LEVEL OF TENSION HAS RISEN WITHIN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY. AMONG ETHIOPIANS THERE IS EQUALLY HIGH OR EVEN HIGHER TENSION IN VIEW NIGHTLY BATTLES BETWEEN PRO AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT FORCES WITH HEIGHTENED UNCERTAINTY OF WHO ARE FRIENDS AND WHO ARE FOES AND FEAR OF ACCIDENTALLY BEING CAUGHT IN CROSS-FIRE BETWEEN TWO FACTIONS.
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